

April 11 - 12, 1970 REFER TO DOS

Contents

USSR

DOS reviewed. Unclassified. Release in full

1. Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Can the Super-Powers Survive? The Soviet Past & Future," Encounter, March 1970. (14 pp.)

Some interesting speculations about Soviet history and about the possibilities of change in the Soviet future. About the Soviet past, for example, Brzezinski wonders whether Stalinism's internal preoccupations and Marxism's universalist pretensions might not have had a tempering effect on Russia's intense chauvinism and nationalism. For the future, Brzezinski suggests some alternative paths that Soviet political development could take.

ITALY

2. Irving R. Levine, "Italy," The Atlantic, April 1970. (5 pp.)

The instability of the Italian political process, Levine writes, leaves effective power in the hands of the cumbersome, inept, and often corrupt Italian bureaucracy. The public expresses its disaffection by evading taxes, bribing bureaucrats, and/or voting Communist. A recently-adopted plan to decentralize the administrative machinery on a regional basis may succeed in bringing the government closer to the people. But the Communists will probably gain control in some of the regions.

LAOS

3. Robert Shaplen, "Our Involvement in Laos," Foreign Affairs, April 1970. (16 pp.)

A journalist and liberal critic of US policy in Vietnam has written a thoughtful piece on the nature of our involvement in Laos and the political and military uncertainties there. He makes the dubious suggestion that we "missed a chance for peace" in Laos last summer, but much of his article is sympathetic: He knocks down various canards about US policy, and he blames the North Vietnamese for the 1969-70 round of escalation and counter-escalation.

THAILAND

4. Jean-Claude Pomonti, "Thailand in the Eye of the Storm," Le Monde (Weekly Selection), March 25, 1970. (7 pp.)

A French correspondent discusses how Thailand is adjusting to the gradual diminution of the American presence, to the apparent intensification of the insurgency in the north and northeast, and to the possibly spreading Indochinese conflict. The government, he concludes, continues to hold the trump cards: Thai institutions are solidly based; the government has managed to improve its position in the outlying areas. The prestige of the monarchy, the competence of the leadership, the apathy of the people, and economic growth have all helped.

VIETNAM

5. "Song My Inquest: For the Prosecution, Idealism" Le Monde (Weekly Selection), March 25, 1970. (1 p.)

A comment on the news that two American generals are to be court-martialled for withholding information about the alleged massacre. The French public's reaction to this news, the article notes, was the mirror image of the American public's: The French, since Algeria, have fewer illusions about the conduct of their fighting men; but such legal proceedings against army officers would be all but inconceivable in France. The American public found it hard to believe that its soldiers could commit such a crime, but, as the evidence mounted, American idealism required that justice be done.